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SUBJECT: OAU/ECA CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN EXPERTS ON MARTIME TRANSPORT AND CONTAINER TRAFFIC, OCTOBER 7-12, 1974 ADDIS ABABA

SUMMARY: OAU/ECA CONFERENCE OF EXPERTS ON MARITIME TRANSPORT AND CONTAINER TRAFFIC HELD TO ESTABLISH AFRICAN POSITION FOR SECOND SESSION OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL PREPARATORY GROUP (IPG) MEETING. AFRICAN POSITION WILL BE TO SEEK DELAY IN DRAFTING INTERNATIONAL INTERMODAL TRANSPORT (IIT) CONVENTION UNTIL OAU/ECA COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS COMPLETES STUDY OF INTERMODALISM IN AFRICAN CONTEXT. OAU ASST. SEC GEN OSANYA-NYYNEQUE WILL LEAD OAU DELEGATION. EMBASSY REQUESTS TELEGRAPHIC SUMMARY USG POSITION ON BASIC IIT ISSUES TO PASS TO OSANYA-NYYNEQUE BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FROM ADDIS NOVEMBER 4. EMD SUMMARY.

1. OAU/ECA CONVENED MEETING TO STUDY PROPOSED DRAFT CONVENTION
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ON INTERNATIONAL INTERMODAL TRANSPORT (IIT) AS IT RELATES TO

AFRICAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES. ECA EXECSEC GARDINER IN OPENING STATEMENT DESCRIBED AIM OF CONFERENCE TO ESTABLISH AN AFRICAN POSITION ON PROPOSALS AND DOCUMENTS PREPARED FOR SECOND SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PREPARATORY GROUP (IPG) MEETING IN GENEVA DURING FIRST WEEK IN NOVEMBER. OAU ASST. SEC GEN OSANYA-NYNEQUE NOTED THAT INTERMODAL TRANSPORT NO LONGER MERELY OF ACADEMIC INTEREST TO AFRICA AND IT NOW DUTY OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES TO DEFEND THEIR INTERESTS.

2. MEETING ADOPTED SERIES OF RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDING:

A) NEED FOR AFRICAN GROUP AT IPG TO ENSURE THAT COMMON AFRICAN POSITION REFLECTS CONTINENT-WIDE DESIRE FOR SPEEDY RATIFICATION OF INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON CODE OF LINER CONDUCT FOR LINER CONFERENCES, AND FACILITATES ACTION PROGRAM IN SUPPORT OF NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER. CONFERENCE RECOMMENDED THAT AFRICAN STAND INCLUDE SUCH BASIC PRINCIPLES AS:

I) GRADUAL INTRODUCTION OF NEW TRANSPORTATION TECHNIQUES, ASSURING THAT LDC'S OWN AND CONTROL THEIR TRANSPORT, INSURANCE AND OTHER RELATED INDUSTRIES; AND ASCERTAINING RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MULTIMODAL TRANSPORT OPERATORS (MTO'S) TO SAFEGUARD INTERESTS OF LDC AND ESPECIALLY AFRICAN MTO'S;

II) RIGHT OF LDC GOVERNMENTS TO CONTROL MULTIMODAL TRANSPORT UNDERTAKINGS WITHIN THEIR TERRITORIES;

III) NEED FOR LDC'S TO ESTABLISH MARITIME AND MULTIMODAL TRANSPORT UNDERTAKINGS AT REGIONAL LEVEL, AND PROVISION FOR MTO'S OPERATING BETWEEN LDC'S AND DC'S TO HAVE PARTIAL RECOURSE TO LDC INSURANCE COMPANIES; AND

IV) PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF LDC TRANSPORT INSURANCE AND RELATED INDUSTRIES AND ENSURING THEIR PARTICIPATION IN MULTIMODAL TRANSPORT.

B) ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AD HOC COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS UNDER OAU/ECA AUSPICES TO UNDERTAKE TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC STUDY OF IMPLICATION OF MULTIMODAL TRANSPORT TO AFRICA AND MAKE STUDY'S RESULTS AVAILABLE TO OAU MEMBER STATES BEFORE THEY TAKE PART IN DRAFTING OF IIT CONVENTION.

3. ECA TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION CHIEF LARDNER (SIERRA LEONE) EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT TO EMBOFF OVER RESULTS OF CONFERENCE. DESPITE OAU CALL TO MEMBER STATES TO PARTICIPATION BY EXPERTS WHO ALSO WOULD PARTICIPATE IN IPG MEETING, CONFEREES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRIMARILY FIRST SECRETARIES OF ADDIS-BASED EMBASSIES. DIPLOMATS' INITIAL REACTION WAS TO POSTPONE CONFERENCE UPON SEEING COMPLEX TECHNICAL QUESTIONS RAISED BY IIT. OAU/ECA ABLE CONVINCE CONFEREES TO CONTINUE IN VIEW OF FORTHCOMING IPG MEETING. LARDNER CONCERNED ABOUT AFRICAN CONCENTRATION ON MULTIMODAL PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH MOVING GOODS BETWEEN AFRICA AND EUROPE RATHER THAN ON INTRA-AFRICAN TRADE. HE FEELS POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ARGUMENTS FOR REGULATION OF

INTERMODAL TRANSPORT WITHIN AFRICA EVEN MORE COMPELLING.
LARDNER FEELS THERE IS LACK OF BODY OF INTERMODAL TRANSPORT
EXPERIENCE FOR AD HOC COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS TO STUDY USEFULLY.
HE WOULD RATHER SEE A TRIAL PERIOD DURING WHICH WORLD
INTERMODAL COMMUNITY WOULD TRY NEW DOCUMENTATION AND LIABILITY
CONCEPTS BEFORE CEMENTING PRESENT UNTESTED IDEAS IN IIT
CONVENTION. (ECA REP TO IPG MEETING WILL BE GEORGE DOWNIE (UK)
WHO KNOWN TO MEMBERS USDEL.)

4. ASST. SEC GEN OSANYA-NYYNEQUE WILL LEAD OAU DELEGATION TO IPG
MEETING. HE TOLD EMBOFF HE IS UNDER INSTRUCTIONS TO PRESS FOR
POSTPONEMENT IIT DRAFTING UNTIL OAU/ECA COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS HAS
COMPLETED STUDY. OSANYA-NYYNEQUE INTERESTED IN MEETING USDEL TI
IPG AND WISHES BRIEFING ON USG POSITION ON IIT. HE NOTED THAT
UNLIKE OUR RESPECTIVE POSITIONS ON CODE OF LINER CONDUCT, HE
FEELS THERE ARE AREAS OF POTENTIAL USG/AFRICAN COOPERATION ON
IIT ISSUES.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: OSANYA-NYYNEQUE HAS IMPORTANT ROLE IN
FORMULATING OAU POSITION ON IIT. IN VIEW TENDENCY OF MANY
AFRICAN STATES TO FOLLOW OAU LEAD ON SUCH ISSUES EMBASSY
REQUESTS TELEGRAPHIC SUMMARY OF USG POSITION ON BASIC IIT
ISSUES TO PASS TO OSANYA-NYYNEQUE BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE NOVEMBER
4. EMBOFF SUGGESTED OSANYA-NYYNEQUE CONTACT USDEL MEMBER REDDING
FOR EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON IIT. USDEL SHOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF
PRESENCE OF WELL INFORMED AND RECEPTIVE OAU OFFICIAL TO
EXPLORE AREAS OF POSSIBLE COOPERATION.
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